

Everett, Adolph

From: Evangelista, Pat
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2014 11:25 AM
To: Everett, Adolph; LaPadula, John; Hauptman, Mel; Acosta, Ildefonso; Chester, Amy; Simon, Paul; Karlen, Delmar; Iglesias, Ariel; Ofra, Rebecca; Robles, Sadira; Saghafi, Farnaz; Keveney, Emmet
Subject: FW: Rahway Arch Review
Attachments: Schnabel_PEI_3_5_2008.pdf

FYI

From: Andrew Voros [mailto:asvoros@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2014 11:13 AM
To: Evangelista, Pat
Subject: Rahway Arch Review

Pat,

I wanted to bring a few things to your attention regarding Region II's review of the Rahway Arch Project, especially given the August 26th letter from the New York State Attorney General's office to USEPA and NJDEP. Please let me know if there is anything we can provide your reviewers. Here are the points:

1. Despite some statements in media coverage of the project **the exact extent of existing contamination on site is unknown.**
 - **the majority of the saturated sludge on site, variously described as "alum sludge," "YPS sludge," etc. is in fact mostly a pH neutral gypsum (calcium carbonate) compound.**
 - **while Total Cyanide has been detected, it has not been determined what proportion of that is Free Cyanide, which, under the site's saline conditions tends to be limited.**
 - **The cyanide content has been hyped to increase the apparent contamination of the site, but the contractor has refused repeated requests by NJDEP technical staff to differentiate Total Cyanide from Free Cyanide.**
 - **NJDEP technical staff have noted that just two, out of twenty, PAH samples, which are outliers, skew the entire "PAH contamination" profile of the site, which in any case is limited to the berms between the sludge ponds, which is a vast minority of the site.**
 - **Sludge samples were universally devoid of PAH contamination, yet the above mentioned two outliers are being used to justify placing PAH contaminated soils across the entire 90 acres of the site, even though PAH contamination- if any- is confined to the berm surfaces.**
 - **NJDEP technical staff finally concluded that the projects deficiencies have been addressed incorrectly, or not at all.**
2. The physical properties analysis of the sludge, which purportedly consists of 2 million tons across 90 acres, ranging in thickness from a few to 20 feet, is based on a single sample.
3. As stated by NJDEP component reviewers, the remedial approach is "technically questionable." original correspondence between the property owners (Rahway Arch Properties) and NJDEP stated that:

"The alum ponds must be stabilized for any activity to occur. We envision a true remediation involving several components, including fly ash for stabilization, construction material and amended dredge material."

Elsewhere, "rebar" and "wick drains" are mentioned, which would have to be used in any sensible approach to dealing with what the contractor calls "non-load-bearing" sludges. Of course, none of these engineering controls will be used, neither to reinforce the "unstable earth berms" or to properly dewater the sludges prior to placement of the material.

- An **engineering study proposal of the site produced by Schnabel Engineering** (attached) was commissioned by H. Duie Pyle when the Borough of Carteret proposed to "trade" the site for Pyle's existing nearby operation. **The study details the difficulties posed by the unstable nature of the site**, and describes small demonstration" efforts using instrumentation to determine the effect of loading the site with fill.
- as previously pointed out, including in the August 26 letter from the NYS AG's office, **the critical engineering report (The Baker report) used to justify placement of unconsolidated fill across the flood-prone area is being withheld by NJDEP**, and component reviewers at DEP have not seen it. Our understanding is that DEP's "approval" of the report consists of certifying that it was submitted by an LSRP.

4. An **unaddressed issue of the project is the placement of 3 to 5 feet, or more, depending on settling, of so-called "fair drainage material" across the entire project**, that will **NOT** be compacted. This material will be contaminated soils that will be dumped onto the sludge ponds, from atop the ("unstable") earthen berms, and then somehow spread across the none-load-bearing sludge. This material is somehow supposed to "consolidate the unconfined sludges beneath them, using no wick drains.

Since the rationale for allowing contaminated material on the site is that the contractor is engaged in "solidification/stabilization," placing contaminated soils loosely on the surface, even if mixed with the 1% cement the contractor is required to add, will not solidify nor stabilize the contaminants. That material will be subjected to being washed into the river during any fluvial or storm surge flooding, that according to the contractor "regularly overtops the berms."

5. For your information, I am submitting to you under a separate email the NY/NJ Baykeeper's ethics complaints filed against Soil Safe's LSRP/PE licenses in New Jersey before the NJDEP LSRP Board (which has created a committee to investigate the allegations) and the NJ Board of Professional Engineers. This is relevant because of that individual's misleading practices that arrive at foregone conclusions based on his client's needs. the complaints document specific issues regarding the contractor's decisions regarding the Rahway Arch Project.

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Andrew

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Andrew S. Voros
asvoros@gmail.com